

BE CAREFUL ABOUT NEWER PATCH THE PIRATE TAPES

Updated December 10, 2007 (first published June 14, 2000) (David Cloud, Fundamental Baptist Information Service, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, 866-295-4143, fbns@wayoflife.org; for instructions about subscribing and unsubscribing or changing addresses, see the information paragraph at the end of the article) -

While most of the music produced by Majesty Music of Greenville, South Carolina (headed up by Ron and Shelly Hamilton), is excellent, we must warn that some of the newer recordings are moving in a contemporary direction. This is particularly true of the newer Patch the Pirate children's tapes.

The Mount Zion Marathon tape for example, has a song titled "Lazy Bones," which is certainly akin to rock music. It uses a syncopated rhythm with a heavy, synthesized bass. The music would be right at home in a nightclub or a sleazy Broadway play. Though it is tame compared to much of the standard CCM fare today, Patch the Pirate's "Lazy Bones" will help develop an appetite in children for worldly music. Other examples of this can be found on their newer tapes.

Some will doubtless protest that I have no right to judge Majesty Music by my own opinion of what is or is not worldly, that they themselves see absolutely nothing wrong with the new Patch tapes. I readily admit that there is much that is subjective about music, and that it is sometimes difficult to nail down precisely what is and is not wholesome. This being the case, isn't the wisest approach to avoid all appearance of evil, to be certain that we offend in nothing? Instead of taking this wise path of avoiding every semblance of worldliness and maintaining only the most unquestionable standard for music, though, Majesty Music is pushing the musical boundaries for the fundamentalist and Bible-believing Baptist churches that use the Patch tapes, subtly and gradually moving them into the CCM sphere.

Books published by Ron Hamilton's father-in-law, Frank Garlock, plainly condemn the use of worldly music to serve a holy God. Dr. Garlock observes: "It is absurd to think that one can unite Christian lyrics with the medium of the world (rock music) and expect the meaning and communication to remain the same" (*Music in the Balance*, 1992, p. 31). Yet this is exactly what Patch the Pirate is doing with songs such as "Lazy Bones." Dr. Garlock says it is absolutely untrue to claim that music is simply a matter of personal taste (p. 7). He carefully describes the characteristics of worldly music. He defines rock music by its rhythm and quotes British sociologist Simon Frith, "The sexuality of music is usually referred to in terms of its rhythm--it is the beat that commands a directly physical response." That is why rock music is so incredibly popular. It literally feels good; it affects

people on a sensual level. And let us be reminded that rock music is not defined by how fast the rhythm moves. Rock music comes in a wide variety of speeds, but the slow or soft rock of “Lazy Bones” is just as much rock music as the soft rock of many of the Beatles tunes.

Consider the following warning by Dr. H.T. Spence, president of Foundations Bible College & Seminary. Dr. Spence is a fundamentalist historian and teacher who has taught music, history, and theology for 25 years. He received part of his music training at Bob Jones University: “The simple, soft music of Patch the Pirate Goes in Space has mutated into an eclectic fashion of contemporary sounds in The Misterslippi River Race (the first of the recordings which caused much alarm from many Fundamentalists) ... the next recording in the series, The Calliope Capers, literally increased the eclectic approach to the music, with just about every song written in a different style of contemporary music” (Dr. H.T. Spence, *Confronting Contemporary Christian Music*, Foundations Bible College & Seminary, 1997, pp. 138,140).

Don Jasmin, editor of the Fundamentalist Digest, adds this warning: “The Fundamentalist Digest editor firmly believes that children who become ‘addicted’ to ‘Patch’s’ music could develop a light frivolous approach to Holy Scripture and sacred Biblical truth. This does not mean that he believes Bible truth must be presented in a boring and dull manner! He believes that the strategy of Bill Mason and the Children’s Bible Clubs in Greenville, SC, is vastly superior in both its Scriptural teaching approach and musical methodology to that of Ron Hamilton and the ‘Patch the Pirate’ clubs” (Don Jasmin, *Fundamentalist Digest*, May/June 2000, p. 21, P.O. Box 2322, Elkton, MD 21922. 410-392-4569).

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